



# Msst Galveston TIMES

7707 harborside dr Galveston, tx 77554

(409) 941-8100

## *Quarterly News Letter*

### Commanding officer's corner

Hello and welcome to the first newsletter from Marine Safety and Security Team Galveston (91104)! I'd like to take this opportunity to say welcome aboard to our extended family because we all know behind every Coast Guard member is an extensive support network of mothers, fathers, wives, children and more. I would like to introduce myself as we've had a crew turnover of approximately 50% including the Commanding Officer. I am LCDR Erik Leuenberger, just arrived from Joint Interagency Task Force West in Hawaii, where I served as International Maritime Training coordinator. I was frequently deployed to South East Asia and spent some time in the following countries; Korea, Japan, Cambodia, Thailand, and Bangladesh. In the more distant past, I served two tours on the High Endurance cutter, HAMILTON (WHEC 715) and two tours at Pacific Tactical Law Enforcement Teams.

The purpose of this newsletter is to get helpful information out to our extended family but for security purposes we will avoid discussing future and current operations. It will cover a variety of topics that will range from local events to knowing "who's who at the unit." For instance, there are several interesting events happening at The Grand (1894 Opera House, [www.thegrand.com](http://www.thegrand.com)) on Galveston island. They range from plays to concerts and just to drop a few names, B.B. King, The Beach Boys, The Kingston Trio (my dad's era and he'll be coming to listen!) and the Oak Ridge Boys are scheduled to perform. Galveston and Texas got it going on! Also are you considering a vacation? Please keep [www.afvclub](http://www.afvclub) in mind. The Coast Guard is a participating military branch and through the Armed Forces Vacation Club you can get Five Star accommodations at **\$264 A WEEK!** I don't know about you, but I recently stayed at a no star rating hotel on Galveston island and it was \$140 for one night! The program is like a timeshare and you can get places all over the world. If anyone is a military retiree reading this, I believe the program is open to you to. Please check it out!

We'd like to hear from you! Please feel free to contact me at [eleuenberger@msstgalveston.uscg.mil](mailto:eleuenberger@msstgalveston.uscg.mil) or our editor, LT Dave Block.

### Executive officer's corner

Greetings from a Coastie who's proud to be this unit's Executive Officer! I'd like to use this—our very first unit newsletter—to offer my assistance to our family members in anyway I can. Supported by the finest Administrative staff I've ever had the pleasure of working with, we stand ready to not only answer any questions you may have, but also serve you in the very best way we can. Assignment to an MSST with such a dynamic history can be challenging to both the Coast Guard members and their families. Fully appreciating this, we'll strive to lessen the burden of administrative and pay matters for you all. You deserve nothing less than our best effort, and you have our support. Until our next newsletter, have a happy and safe quarter. *LT Steven Garcia*

### Command chief's corner

Greetings, I'm ITC Dennis James, the Command Chief for MSST Galveston. As Command Chief, I act as the Senior Enlisted Adviser and try to promote a balance between the needs of the enlisted work force and command goals. I communicate directly with the Commanding Officer and the Command Master Chief at Atlantic Area on issues concerning enlisted personnel. I am available to all members of the crew and their dependents. Now that you know about me and my job I would like to cover a view items of interest.

Recently we recognized an active duty member and reserve member as Enlisted Person of the Year for MSST Galveston. EM1 David Galvan was this past year's active duty Enlisted Person of the Year and AET2 Matthew Maggiolino was the recipient of the reserve Enlisted Person of the Year award. Both did an outstanding job and are well deserving.

All active duty members should note that their



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Servicemember's Group Life Insurance (SGLI) maximum coverage will increase from \$250,000 to \$400,000 on Sept 1<sup>st</sup> this year. Rates per \$1000 will remain the same at 6.5 cents. Currently \$250,000 coverage costs \$16.25 per month, \$400,000 will cost \$26.00 per month.

MSST Galveston will be participating with other local units in the CG Day celebration on August 4<sup>th</sup>. This year's CG Day activities will be held at the Big League Dreams Sports Park in League City [http://www.bigleaguedreams.com/newparkdev/newparkdev\\_index.htm](http://www.bigleaguedreams.com/newparkdev/newparkdev_index.htm). The event will begin at 10am and end at 3pm. Some of the activities for the day will be a moon walk, slip 'n' slide, dunk tank, spades tournament and softball tournament. There will be a small charge to cover the cost of food. We will know the exact amount by the second week of July. Hope to see lots of the MSST family in attendance.

With the summer season upon us I would like to remind everyone of some of the safety concerns that come with the warm weather. Summer is a time for travel so please take care when out on the roads. Get plenty of rest and always use seat belts and car seats. Remember to protect yourself and children from the hot Texas sun with plenty of sunscreen and appropriate clothing.

Also, June 1<sup>st</sup> was the beginning of hurricane season. Preparations should be made well in advance of any hurricane. Some helpful information can be found at the following websites:

<http://www.fema.gov/areyouready>  
<http://www.noaa.gov/stormwatch/>  
<http://www.click2weather.com/hurricanes/index.html>  
[http://www.weather.com/newscenter/tropical/?from=wxcenter\\_news](http://www.weather.com/newscenter/tropical/?from=wxcenter_news)

The voluntary evacuation site for MSST Galveston members and dependents is Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio. Procedures are in place for members and families to evacuate to San Antonio if the need arises.

That's all for this newsletter. Hope to see you all at CG Day on August 4<sup>th</sup>.

Educational services officer corner

**Consider adding off duty educational opportunities to your IDP** (Individual Development Plan)(<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-w/g-wt/g-wt/idp/index.htm>)

If you're anything like me, you know that going back to school is the right thing to do, but can quickly and easily talk yourself out of it because of the pressures of work, family, or a thousand other excuses. Continuing your education takes significant personal commitment and a desire to better yourself, but taken one step at a time it can be done. You will find that your perspective towards education will change, as you grow older, get married, have kids etc.

It took me 15 years of on again off again attempts to finally learn enough on my own to earn an associates degree. As an E-6 I literally had to do the research, read the policies and educate the CWO ESO to get my 75% tuition assistance approved. This was definitely worth it to complete the 1 actual college course I needed to finish the degree. Having since been awarded additional credits associated with advancements to Chief and promotion to CWO, and having signed away all my GI Bill benefits years ago, I am motivated to complete a Bachelors Degree prior to retiring from the Coast Guard. I have earned 15 upper level credits in the past 12 months by taking 1 course at a time. 2 actual distance learning History courses and 3 Excelsior College (DANTEs) exams through the MSU. It has not been easy, it has at times caused significant tension at home and required me to read lessons and complete written assignments in the evenings after helping my kids with their homework, instead of "vegging" in front of the TV.

Its not about me, it is about a program that has matured significantly over the last 20 years and is currently available to you. Take advantage of these benefits while the funding is strong.

1. Complete an educational assessment
2. Determine where you want to be in 5, 10 and 20 years



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3. Decide if a college degree would be beneficial....
4. Sign out a CLEP Study Guide and take a CLEP Exam
5. Take advantage of the current 100% Tuition Assistance available

**Educational Assessment:** Anyone who believes they submitted, or someone submitted for them, an educational assessment and has not received a completed unofficial assessment from the CG Institute will need to resubmit. Bring me a copy of your original submission, see me for printed copies, or complete the assessment worksheet again. Forms are available from:

[http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cgi/forms/1560\\_04e.pdf](http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cgi/forms/1560_04e.pdf)

It is your responsibility to fill out. Directions are straight forward, the more information you can provide the better. Direct Access is a good source of information for schools, dates of advancement and course completions. Certificates and or course completion letters for non-standard training is helpful.

Once you have compiled all available information bring to me for verification and signature and mailing. Make sure you get a copy for your records.

Recent submission for MSST Galveston member netted results in 8 weeks.

*CWO FJ Wilson*

### Chaplain's corner

“Great are the works of the Lord;

They are pondered by all who delight in them” -  
Psalm 111: 2

I am delighted to have this opportunity to introduce myself to all of you at MSST Galveston.

Although I have not had a great deal of time to become familiar with your mission, I learned a great deal from

participating in your recent change of command and the opportunity it afforded me to get a glimpse of your

motivated unit. I hope to bring the same level of motivation to your spiritual needs as we continue this journey of service together.

A quick word about myself, I was most recently the command Chaplain on the USS SHILOH CG 67 a guided missile cruise based in San Diego California. We were part of the Abraham Lincoln Strike Group and participated in the immediate response to the tsunami that devastated the coastline of Sumatra and other coastal areas in the Indian Ocean. Before that, I was a flight line Chaplain working with the Marine Harrier pilots in Yuma, Arizona. While serving the Marines, I had a seven-month tour in Afghanistan as part of Enduring Freedom. My wife Cheryl and I are excited to be on the Texas gulf coast now, working with the Coast Guard. Through our experiences serving the armed forces we have found the scripture verse noted above to be true. Great work is being done daily! As I ponder the experiences we have had, I realize anew each day it is by God's grace we are able to continue in this exciting ministry.

I hope to have the chance to meet each of you and look forward to working along side you as we strive to make our nation a safe place for our citizens.

*Semper Paratus,*

*Chaplain Primeaux*

[jprimeaux@grugalveston.uscg.mil](mailto:jprimeaux@grugalveston.uscg.mil)

(409) 766-5667

### Reserves corner

MSST 91104 is one of only 4 MSST Commands that Have Reserves. Selected Reserves (SELRES) form a critical component to the overall capabilities of the MSST in Galveston and have deployed on a number of missions with the Active Duty Component since the Units Commissioning in 2002. All SELRES assigned to MSST Galveston are volunteers, and have agreed to complete 5-year assignments to their billets. Many of the current SELRES are Plankowners of the MSST, originally assigned in 2002 as the Unit was established.



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Many of the SELRES are Prior Active duty who have pursued civilian careers in Law Enforcement, Fire Service, and Private Security.

Unlike SELRES assigned to other USCG Units who complete 48 drills and 2 weeks ADT, MSST SELRES complete 60 weekend drills and 15 days ADT. The Senior SELRES assigned to MSST Galveston is LT Robert Ream. LT Ream is designated as the SELRES XO, and reports directly to the CO as a member of the Command Cadre. MSST Galveston is fortunate to have two Chiefs, BMC Arndt and MKC Wright who bring an matched level of professionalism to the team. The rest the SELRES Crew is comprised primarily of PS, BM, MK's, with members assigned to physical security, boat crews and admin. It is the SELRES expressed goal to develop and maintain the necessary qualifications to immediately integrate with the Active Duty Component of the Command seamlessly and efficiently upon recall. On many occasions, SELRES from MSST 91104 have answered the call, serving in loadout operations for OIF, Deployments to New York, Savannah, Corpus Christi, Haiti, G-8 Summit, and a host other the deployments. SELRES are tasked with maintaining the same qauls as our Active Duty Counterparts, and focus weekend drills and ADT to achieve this difficult goal. The MSST SELRES Focal point with Active Duty is CWO Thomas Horan. Mr. Horan is the link through which the SELRES and Active duty personnel coordinate.

### Obudsman corner

Although I have met many of you, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself, and to define my mission and goals for serving the families of out unit. My name is Stephanie Pipkin. I am the wife of ET1 Dan Pipkin and the mom of three kids, Fiona (11), Nolan (8), and Ian (3). I have been a Coast Guard wife for more than 12 years, and before that was an Army brat, so you might say that I have the hang of the military lifestyle. I have been Ombudsman for MSST 91104 for almost a year.

Ombudsmen are here to assist Coast Guard families. I am a volunteer who works as a liaison between the Command and unit families. I work directly for the

Commanding Officer, serving as a link between him and the unit families, making him aware of families' concerns and serving as a point of contact for them.

Although I am always here to help, I am not permitted to become involved in work-related issues that would be better served by the service member using the chain of command.

I respect your privacy and cannot pass information without your express permission, and then only on a need-to-know basis. Be assured that anything that is discussed with me will remain confidential except in the case of family violence, neglect, drug abuse, and suicide attempts, all of which I am required to report.

It is my job and my pleasure to direct Coast Guard families to any of the many resources that are available and dedicated to military families. A few of these may be related to medical/dental benefits, special needs, childcare/eldercare, relocation, employment, education, scholarships and tuition assistance, and counseling. If I do not have an immediate answer, I will do my best to find it. Likewise, if you have discovered any great resources, please pass them on.

You may wonder why I wanted to be Ombudsman. In part it is because as the mother of a special needs child, I have experienced first hand the help an Ombudsman can give in a time of crisis. Another reason is because of my background as a military dependent, and the importance of the help that families can offer each other.

I have found that the families at deployable units form a unique bond making the closeness and mutual support one of our strongest assets. We have all made good friends in the communities where we live, but nobody "gets it" like another military family.



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To facilitate this unity, I would like to begin to have more social events. Depending on interest, we could plan:

\*Potluck/recipe exchange or chili cook off/bar-b-que.  
Events for the holidays.

\*Adopt a Coastie for the holidays.

\*Invite someone from ISC or the community to talk to the families about topics such as deployment/coping, financial planning, Tricare/Concordia benefits, relocation, and hurricane preparedness.

I also think it would be great if we could involve our unit service members and families in a community service project. I was very proud when I heard about my husband's prior unit helping to fix up an orphanage in Indonesia while they were there, and wonder if we might do something similar here. Ideas are welcome.

You can contact me any time, preferably during daytime or early evening hours. I can be reached by phone at 409-771-4377, and by e-mail at:

[OmbMSST91104@aol.com](mailto:OmbMSST91104@aol.com).

I look forward to working with our new CO, continuing to know and serve our families in any way that I can, and to meeting all of our newcomers.

*Stephanie Pipkin*

Medical corner/health & fitness

Hello my name is HS2 Sanchez, your MSST Galveston Corpsman.

### **Topic: Summer Safety**

Wear sun block while outdoors, you should also reapply every 1 ½ hours for infants and every 2 hours for adults. Spf 30 is all that is really needed; using a sun block of SPF 45 or higher only gives you a 2% more block. Keep in mind you still have to reapply in the set hours mentioned above. More spf does not mean longer coverage, just more money that you spent for 2% coverage.

### **Topic: Health and Fitness – Free Passes!**

Galveston Health and Racquet club has issued me 1-week passes to the gym. These passes are available for your dependants. Enjoy 7 days at Galveston Health and Racquet Club and all its facilities for seven days. This includes the day care and kids club, spinning classes, body pump, step and much more. You will be amazed of all this gym has to offer. I have special prices available for adding family members. Please contact me for additional details.

### **Topic: Tricare information**

If you are new to this area “Welcome to Galveston”! Here are a few things that have to be done upon arrival. Check in to Admin at Group Galveston to update your information in Deers. Next to the Deers office is the Tricare office. You must resubmit a new Tricare form to switch you into this Tricare region. This is very important so that your bills will get paid. They can also walk you through the steps of choosing your new Doctor for your Dependents. I have those forms available in my office as well.

Sick Call: Sick Call for MSST91104 personnel is at 0900-1130 Daily. If I am out of the office on leave or deployed. Sick call at group is M-F 0700-0730 and 1230-1300. Your first choice for sick call should be Group Galveston; however, you may use Ellington’s clinic if that is closer to you.

<http://www.usfhp.org/portal/default.asp> -US Family Health Care Plan, another option besides Tricare.

<http://www.humana-military.com/> -Tricare website (south region)

<http://www.healthylife.com/TipOfTheDay.asp> - health tip of the day

<https://secure.ucci.com/tuctmi/nonsecure/UCCIRegistration.jsp> - Dental plan for dependants

welcome aboard corner





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The Command would like to welcome aboard the following personnel:

LCDR Erik Leuenberger	MK2 Raymond Beers
BM3 Jason Kifer	FN David Cesiano
YN2 Kelly Lizama	MKCS Mike Krump
GMC Troy Schull	BM2 David Ramirez
BMC John Carpenter	BM3 Dana Anderson
MSTC Shawn Lootens	BM3 Daniel Rivas
GM1 Mike West	BM3 Cesar Ruelas
BMC Ty Farrell	MK2 John Elder
BM1 Chris Fingleman	SK1 Shelley McCollum
MK1 Wendell Burnette	LTjg Loreleigh Whiteside
MK2 Pablo Perez	EM3 Anthony Mascitelli
MK2 Samuel Cuellar	LT Sean Hughes
MK2 Ralph Figueroa	BM3 Mark Stuart
MK2 Travis Walton	MK3 Chris Clevenger
ENS James Hobbs	

### Departure corner

The Command would like to wish "Fair Winds and Following Seas" to our departing personnel:

LCDR Thompson – PACAREA (POF)  
LT Galman – PATFORSWA  
LT Fegler – Gru One San Diego  
LT Rivera – CGC MIDGETT  
LTjg Olivera – D8 (OLE)  
CWO2 Fayard – MSO Morgan City  
BMC Wilkins – MSO Houston  
BMC Martinez – MSO Houston  
SKC Tahtinen – CGC RUSH  
GMC Dice – MSST Chesapeake  
GMC Raymond – MSST Seattle  
MKC Schilling – CGC MARLIN  
BM1 Hardin – CGC GALVESTON ISLAND  
BM1 Dell – CGC ASPEN  
BM1 Castro – International Training Division  
MK1 Reinhart – CGC MUSKINGUM  
MK1 Bolsenga – CGC POLAR SEA  
MK1 Cardosi – CGC CHASE  
MK2 Elshire – CGC MATAGORDA

MK2 Buckner – Det Natchez  
MK2 Caropepe – Det Vicksburg  
MK2 Wisenbaker – ANT Galveston  
BM2 Kuzak – CGC GANNETT  
ET2 Switoyus – NAVCAN TISCOM  
YN2 Restuch – CGHQ  
MK3 Guillot – NESU New Orleans  
BM3 Murillo – MSST San Francisco  
BM3 Herrera – STA Wilmette Harbor



LTjg Olivera



BM1 Castro



MST2 Forbis



LT Fegler

### Editors note

As the editor of the MSST Galveston Times I want to let everyone know how excited the command is about this newsletter. Please realize that this new quarterly publication will belong to ALL of us—members and families alike. We'll always encourage you to give us feedback, and welcome any suggestions you may have to make this newsletter useful to the most people. Please don't hesitate to contact me at (409) 941-8104, or email to [dblock@msstgalveston.uscg.mil](mailto:dblock@msstgalveston.uscg.mil) if you want to contribute. *LT Dave Block*